

Message Text

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64

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 INR-10 LAB-06

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 DODE-00 L-03 RSR-01 /048 W

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R 092300 Z APR 73

FM AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1577

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL PERTH

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: ELAB, AS

SUBJECT: LABOR RELATIONS AT US NAVAL STATION NORTH WEST CAPE

1. LABATT MET WITH JAMES COLEMAN, SECRETARY, WEST AUSTRALIAN TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL (TLC) ON APRIL 3, TOGETHER WITH US CONSUL WILLIAM BRUNS WHO HAS FILED SEPARATE MEMCON DATED APRIL 3. COLEMAN GAVE HIS OFT-REPEATED AND MUCH PUBLICIZED VIEW OF THE NORTH WEST CAPE US NAVAL STATION' S LABOR SITUATION; HOWEVER REVEALING HIS KNOWLEDGE WAS FAR FROM DETAILED. COLEMAN WAS MUCH GIVEN TO GENERALITIES, CLAIMING GOOD CONDITIONS OF LABOR AT BASE ATTRIBUTABLE TO GENERAL EFFORTS HIS ORGANIZATION TO UP- GRADE WORKERS THROUGHOUT WESTERN AUSTRALIA. HE OBVIOUSLY UPSET AT PRO- MANAGEMENT PUBLIC STATEMENTS MADE BY RANK- AND- FILE AT NAVAL INSTALLATION AND VERY CRITICAL HIS OWN REPRESENTATIVE AT BASE.

2. LABATT REVIEWED CAPE SITUATION WITH BASE COMMANDER, CAPTAIN RICHARD CUNNINGHAM USN, BASE INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS OFFICER (IRO) VIRGIL WILLIBUR, AND ASSISTANT IRO HARRY SKEPPER, DURING APRIL 4 AND 5. LABATT ALSO TALKED WITH VARIOUS ORDINARY WORKERS. IT EVIDENT THAT EXCELLENT RELATIONSHIP EXISTS BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND WORKERS AT BASE, AND THAT COMMANDER HAS ACHIEVED HIGH DEGREE OF COMMUNITY ACCEPTABILITY.

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FACTS RELATING TO PRESENT POSITION OF INDUSTRIAL
RELATIONS HAVE BEEN SEPARATELY REPORTED IN FULL.

3. COMMENT: LABATT THINKS IT FAIR TO SAY THAT TLC
SECRETARY COLEMAN, WITH LITTLE OR NO REAL INFORMATION
ABOUT NAVAL BASE, WAS TEMPTED TO TRY MILD INTERVENTION
INTO GENERAL POLITICAL SITUATION INVOLVING BASE. HE
MADE SMALL POLITICAL CAPITAL BUT HAS ALIENATED
RANK- AND- FILE WORKERS AT BASE AND TLC CONSTITUENT
UNIONS WHO REPRESENT THEM. ON BALANCE, THIS AUGURS
WELL FOR UP- COMING PERIODIC WAGE NEGOTIATIONS SCHEDULED
FOR MAY 20. LABATT EXPECTS THAT NAVY IRO NOW IN
BETTER POSITION FOR INFORMAL DISCUSSIONS ABOUT FURTHER
IMPLEMENTATION OF ECONOMY MEASURES, DIRECTLY WITH
UNIONS CONCERNED AND IN ADVANCE OF NEGOTIATION DATE.
IT IS EVIDENT THAT WORKERS AND UNIONS, IN PRESENT
CASE, FEEL CLOSER TO EMPLOYERS THAN TO TLC.
WHATEVER EVENTUATES ON MAY 20 WILL BE DONE WITH
FULLEST UNDERSTANDING ON BOTH SIDES.
FLUKER

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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